(d) Article 7 of the SAFTA provides for a phased Tariff Liberalization Programme (TLP) covering all tariff lines except those in the Sensitive List of each Contracting State. In view of different budget periods of the contracting States, TLP has been given effect from 1st July 2006, except in the case of Nepal for which it is from 1st August 2006. Implementation of SAFTA is expected to significantly boost Intra-SAARC Trade and economies of all contracting States including India but it cannot be quantified at this stage.

Formation of a new WTO like association

2754. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is working towards organizing the third world countries to form a new association or forum like "World Trade Organisation";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In view of the benefits accruing from its membership of the WTO, which has agreements that are rule-based, transparent and predictable, the issue of forming an alternative forum to the WTO has not been considered.

Special Economic Zones

2755. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:
SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number and locations of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) approved by Government;